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BETTER PLANTS

God's first gift to man was a Beautiful Garden



VOLUME II

NOVEMBER—DECEMBER, 1924

NUMBER 6



A cat may look at a King Alfred. Garden of Rayman F. Fritz, Rock Creek, Ohio

Farr's Peonies at home. Garden of Mrs. Roy Frey, Wyomissing, Penna.

Princess Elizabeth Tulips grown by Miss Josephine P. Kinnier, Lynchburg, Va.

"'Could I but find
A scented Iris, I should be content;
Yet men would call me proud:
Iris is Pride.'"—Robert Bridges.
In the garden of Bradley Cook, Oley, Penna.

Midsummer in Minnesota. The garden of L. M. Sikes, at Excelsior.

The American Iris Society

By R. S. Sturtevant, Secretary

The work of our Society is of value to every gardener who grows an iris; and how can anyone, who has received Mr. Farr's catalog, resist buying at least one iris, and probably one of his productions. The Society was organized in 1920, but it was back in 1909 at least, that I first reveled in a Farr catalog and added things like Juniata, Montezuma, and Wyomissing to my garden.

Much more recently have come Georgia and Seminole, outstanding things despite competition with a hundred other novelties of the same vintage. And it is chiefly because there is such competition that the work of the Iris Society is of value.

You will find that most catalogs now quote the results of our symposium, and that varieties are rated on a score of 100 as perfection, but such ratings are made the fifth year after introduction, and by then

a variety is no longer a novelty. Our bulletins, however, report more promptly about the worthwhile things, and, moreover, tempt you into growing various species and varieties that would otherwise be rare. Though we have published eleven bulletins covering many phases of iris interest, there is much still to be learned. To be sure, most irises grow with a modicum of care, but some are not so friendly and need a deal of coddling. Such appeal to the connoisseur while others you can naturalize along a stream or on barren slopes.

Do you want new colors for your garden, new adventures in raising plants from seed, new contacts with fellow gardeners, or just more reading along garden lines? Perhaps you prefer information

about exhibitions, about native plants, about the use of irises in park and school planting. Whatever your special interest, we can help you, and as a member of the Society you can help us to spread the knowledge of more and better gardens. The dues are only \$3 a year. That will bring the four 1924 bulletins, and if you still hesitate, order Bulletin 10 "Irises for the Beginner" (at 50 cts.), a sixty-page illustrated new edition.

With such an opportunity, I cannot resist a brief commentary of the splendid work of Mr. Farr in the cause of irises and gardens. His was the vision, and we are but reaping the benefits. His first catalog brought new thoughts, and his seedlings still hold their own in the finest collections. The stately Juniata, fickle Anna Farr, odd Montezuma, blue and white Nokomis, and Mary Garden are now standards by which

we class much-heralded novelties, while we still treasure less highly rated, but still valuable, varieties like the blue-toned Chester Hunt, creamy-pink Wyomissing, and others.

I thank Mr. Farr for his development of irises, for his strong and continued support of our Society, and for this opportunity of getting in touch with so many enthusiastic gardeners.

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER HINTS

This is a good time to take out 6 inches of soil around trees and fill in with equal proportions of mixed soil and manure. You do not expect even the shortlived vegetables to get along without fertilizer. How can you expect a long-lived tree to do well without some nutrition?

Clean the grounds and garden thoroughly this month. Garden pests and their offspring do not like cleanliness.

Save all the furnace ashes. Apply them heavily to trees and shrubs. Sprinkle them on the lawn. They sweeten the soil.

Save all leaves. Do not burn them. Use as a top dressing and for the compost pile. There is nothing better than rotted leaves to break up a heavy soil. Azaleas and rhododendrons appreciate leaf mulch. For storage, keep the leaves in a pit.

We believe it is a mistake to collect or rake grass when mowing the lawn. The cut grass affords nutrition. Mr. Farr has one of the best lawns in the locality and has never removed a blade of cut grass.

See that all plants go into winter with plenty of moisture around their roots. Newly planted trees and shrubs should be particularly well soaked down with water until the ground freezes. Most winter-killing, or failure of evergreens during the winter, is due to the ground freezing dry. This is an important pointer.

Don't forget that roses, weigelas, buddleias, magnolias, Japanese maples, flowering almonds, etc., will winterkill severely unless mounded with earth and given a top dressing of leaves or straw.

Apply top dressings or mulch after the ground freezes, and not before then. The real purpose of mulching is to protect the plants from sudden changes of temperature in spring. Use only loose textured material so as not to smother the plants.

Cut back one-third of all trees and shrubs when planting this fall. This does not include evergreens or shrubs already cut back by the nursery before shipping.

Autumn leaves change color because the green chlorophyll is decomposed. When the sap is of acid character the leaves turn red; when alkaline, they are



Welcome Robin enjoys himself in the garden of Mrs. E. Sauve, Iron River, Wis., for berry-bearing shrubs always attract the birds. He and his mate have royal battles with the bluebirds who also like the berries. The picture was made through the kitchen window.

blue or intermediately violet. Yellow granules, hitherto overshadowed by the green, come to light and thus we have the rich tints of autumn leaves—red, orange, yellow, and purple.

Holland bulbs can be planted as late as March and will bloom the same spring. We tried it this year on Rev. Ewbank and Mr. Farncombe Sanders.

If you are in doubt as to how your plants should be protected against winter, ask us for a back number of the 1923 November-December issue of **BETTER PLANTS**, which contained an article on this subject.

Holland bulb orders will have been shipped by the time this is printed. No doubt we will have some left-overs. If you are interested in purchasing the entire lot at half catalog prices, let us know and we will send you the list. It should total from \$50 to \$200.

NOVEMBER PEONY MOVING SALE

Choice and Rare Varieties at Half the Catalog Price

Frankly, this is not so much a moving sale as a sale to raise cash for moving expenses. We can well afford to move high priced material, but here we have a few choice varieties in sufficient supply to justify a sacrifice to meet immediate needs. Twenty-nine of the world's best peonies are included in this offer.

Terms: At these prices are *strictly cash with order*. When ordering, deduct ½ from catalog prices as listed.

Quality: Our usual high grade 3 to 5 eye divisions.

Guarantee: Safe arrival and replacement of any possible first year failures at half original price paid.

Time Limit: Offer expires Nov. 20th. Peonies are safely planted until the ground freezes.

Rating	Variety	Catalog Price
7.6	Adelaide Hollis	\$5 00
8.8	Alsace-Lorraine	5 00
8.0	Assmanshausen	5 00
	Biebrich	3 50
7.6	Bunker Hill	7 50
7.2	Charles Sedgwith Minot	3 50
7.8	Charles McKellip	5 00
	Comte Horace de Choiseul	4 00
7.1	Darkness	5 00
7.9	Dr. Barnsby	4 00
8.7	Elwood Pleas	6 00
7.4	Eucharis	6 00
	George W. Tryon	3 00
7.7	H. A. Hagen	4 00
	Hovey's White	4 00
8.3	Jeanne Gaudichau	5 00
8.3	La Fontaine	5 00
8.8	Laura Dessert	15 00
	La Verne	5 00
8.4	Mont Blanc	7 50
	Mrs. John M. Lewis	20 00
9.0	Raoul Dessert	15 00
	Raenthal	5 00
7.6	Souv. de Francois Ruitton	6 00
8.8	Souv. de Louis Bigot	10 00
8.3	Splendida	7 00
8.3	Tragedy	4 00

Note: Those who have previously purchased from us any of these varieties at full price, may select other varieties from this list, without charge, to the extent of half their previous purchase. We trust that such orders will be accompanied by a remittance for additional varieties.

KEEPS A CATALOG FOR YEARS

Many years ago—about twenty, I think—I received one of your catalogs of irises, and I suppose I read it through at least a dozen times. Your descriptions of the wonders and beauties of the irises have always stuck in my mind and created a desire to some day raise some of my own. Of course, I don't mean by this that I have been all these years without irises. I have had lots of the Germanica; also some dwarfs (Pumila) but always have I had the desire to go into it deeper, and because yours was the first catalog I ever saw of irises, naturally whenever I think of irises I also think of Farr. I still have that catalog somewhere around. Now you will no doubt think this is a long-winded request for a catalog, which is what I request, but I thought possibly you would be interested to know what an impression your catalog of many years ago produced, and to know that I have valued it highly enough to have preserved it all these years.—A. McKENZIE, Seattle, Washington.

R. S. STURTEVANT, Secretary
Wellesley Farms, Mass.

Dear Sir: I wish to apply for membership in the American Iris Society and enclose \$3 for my dues for the first year.

Name _____

Address _____

Recommended by B. H. Farr.



Artemisia lactiflora as grown by Mrs. A. J. C. Black, Corvallis, Oregon

RED-HEADS AND THE DUTCH

A red-head runs our shipping schedule. He is twenty years young, smokes cigarettes, whistles while he works, but attends evening school—in fact, the local extension of the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, University of Pennsylvania.

This chap is equipped with ambition, brains, files, and the backing of the General Manager to see that orders get out on time and schedule.

Last year his job was created. Orders got out on time and we gave almost 100% shipping service. The red-head is on the job for 1925.

A "Berks County Dutch" is our Iris foreman. He has been with us for eleven years. One day last spring Johnnie came into the office with a worried look. Said he had something to report. "Couldn't sleep last night."

Two days before he had dug an order for ten Iris Lord of June. Yesterday evening he noticed that some stakes in that section were washed out by recent rains and that he had dug the wrong variety for that Lord of June order. Could he make amends? Could we trace the order? Couldn't something be done?

We could trace the order, and Johnnie is still with us. May he dig an order for you?

SURPRISED AT THE SIZE

I am more than pleased with the quality and "quantity" of the plants ordered. When I viewed the size of the plants you sent I was amazed. Never have I seen such large plants, and I have bought plants from a large number of firms who have a national reputation. I wish to thank you for the promptness in which you filled my order, for the manner in which it was packed and for the generous size of the clumps. Any other nursery would have made at least four plants out of the aquilegias you sent.—W. A. JENKINSON, Sioux City, Iowa.

A FAREWELL

My poor little garden, once lovely and gay,
Lies brown and bedraggled. In play
Came the Frost King; with fiery dart
Has taken your beauty, and broken your heart.

Where once were the larkspurs, majestic
and blue,
Forget-me-nots, pansies, bright marigolds,
rue,
Where brilliant-hued dahlias looked smilingly down—
There's nothing but ruins, dull, withered
and brown.

My poor little garden, I loved you so well
Your beauty enmeshed me. Thro' its
magic spell
I loved every leaf, every flower you bore—
You're gone, little garden, I'll see you
no more.

No more? Ah, the comfort of Nature is
this:

After Autumn's farewell comes the welcoming
kiss
Of April, whose rainbows are broken, to
pass
Into hyacinths, tulips, and emerald grass.

Contributed by MRS. CLAYTON W. LAWSON
Coit Rd., North Park, Grand Rapids, Mich.

FROM A BOYHOOD FRIEND

I went to school to "Bert Farr" on the prairie, in Iowa years ago. When I learned you had a nursery, I sent for a catalogue and was not disappointed in the style of catalogue or plants. I read your catalogue from cover to cover and often remarked that was just like you used to say things. I am improving a new home and as my means are limited I shall not make large orders but shall be glad to place them with you, and you may be sure I shall tell my friends where to get dependable goods. With sincere wishes that your business will be all that you wish it to be.
—LUTIE ROOT, Vale, Ark.

A COLORED FRIEND'S COMMENT

The irises sent in January are growing rapidly and the peonies show above ground. Black Tom said last week—"Huh! Mrs. Woodward, dem flags dey stahted ter grow soon ez dey hit de groun; dey didn't stop ter make airy er root an dese yere pinyas, dey's sayin 'howdy,' too."—MRS. H. G. WOODWARD.

MOVING SALE ON SHRUBS

Here is a November special on shrubs. Varieties which we have in surplus and which we will sell at cut prices, rather than move them to Womelsdorf.

This is an opportunity to establish foundation and border plantings of shrubs. The peony and iris moving sales cleaned out our supply. The same thing may happen on these shrubs. Order at once and be sure of receiving them. Offer expires Nov. 20th.

Discounts on the Following List

10% discount on orders amounting to \$5 or more.
15% discount on orders amounting to \$10 or more.
20% discount on orders amounting to \$25 or more.
5 or more plants of one variety at the 10 rate.
25 or more plants of one variety at the 10 rate less 20%.

	Height	Each	10
Caragana arborescens	4-5'	\$1 00	\$8 00
Cornus siberica		60	4 50
Deutzia crenata Wellsii	2-3'	75	6 00
Euonymus alatus	2-3'	1 00	7 50
Europeus	3-4'	90	7 50
Forsythia intermedia	2-3'	60	4 50
suspensa	2-3'	60	4 50
Hydrangea arborescens	2-3'	75	6 00
Bush Honeysuckle	3-4'	75	6 00
Philadelphus coronarius (Mock Orange)	4-5'	1 00	8 00
Norma	3-4'	75	6 00
Spiraea opulifolia aurea	2-3'	60	4 50
Van Houttei	3-4'	1 00	7 50
Symphoricarpos vulgaris	2-3'	60	4 50
Viburnum acerifolium	4-5'	1 00	7 50
lantana	3-4'	75	6 00
lantana	4-5'	90	7 50
molle	3-4'	75	6 00
opulus	3-4'	90	7 50
Sargentii	4-5'	90	7 50
Weigela variegata	3-4'	75	6 00
Hypericum	1½-2'	60	4 50
Lilacs	3-4'	90	7 50
Lilacs	4-5'	1 00	7 50
Lilacs	5-6'	1 25	10 00

We want garden pictures and will give an Iris worth \$2.50 (our selection) for three or more garden photos that we can use in BETTER PLANTS.



Farr's Peonies seem to be as much at home in China as in America. This shows the garden of Mr. Charles Rayner, Shanghai, China, as it appeared on July 3, 1924

Each year to ancient friends adds a ring,
As to an oak, and precious more and more,
Without deservings or help of ours,
They grow, and, silent, wide spread each year
Their unbought ring of shelter or of shade.
—LOWELL.



A Magazine Devoted to the Hardy Garden
BETTER PLANTS—NOV.-DEC., 1924

BETTER PLANTS

TREE PEONIES GROW WELL

The Tree Peonies purchased from you last fall are doing beautifully—in fact we are amazed at their growth—some of them showing six and seven blossom buds.—MRS. V. L. GEORGESON, Seattle, Washington.

DELPHINIUM BLIGHT

I notice many gardeners are having trouble with their delphiniums. Four or five years ago I began to follow Mrs. Ely's plan, which she used when the blight appeared. My plants showed no blight, but I wished to be prepared—so after the first period of bloom I cut the plants back, then pushed the soil away from the crown several inches deep. With this I mixed a small shovelful of coal ashes and a handful of bone meal, digging all as deeply as I could around the roots. Now I have lovely delphiniums.

YOU CERTAINLY MOVED US

In the September-October issue of BETTER PLANTS, we offered certain varieties of iris, peonies, lilacs and perennials at reduced prices. We would not like to sell out on lilacs and perennials but we dared to hope that the iris and peonies offered would be sold out. Our hopes were realized and we wish to thank all of you for taking advantage of the special prices and for helping us to move the plants from the old nursery.

We also want to broadcast an explanation about the orders which, unfortunately, could not be accepted in their entirety. During the first two weeks after the September-October issue was mailed orders came thick and fast, and soon different varieties were sold out. We kept an accurate record of sale and by substituting where permissible, managed to accept almost all orders and to keep the sales uniform on different varieties. We are now entirely sold out of all the iris and peonies offered in the last issue of BETTER PLANTS but still have a good supply of the perennials and lilacs.

As stated before, we do not wish to sell out on perennials and lilacs, but can again emphasize the offer. There is, therefore, still some time and opportunity for you to order from the September-October issue.



Four Iris admirers in an Illinois garden

WINS PRIZES WITH FARR'S IRIS

Two years ago, while in Ridgewood, New York, I purchased a collection of iris from Farr Nurseries. Two years ago, when leaving for the city, I took a root of each of the varieties and brought them with me. I was surprised to find that about ninety per cent of the people here only knew of two colors in the Germanica, the deep purple like "Purple King" and a white, so when mine came into bloom, I had a number of enthusiastic visitors. Every year the high school with an attendance of nearly three thousand, have a flower show which is one of the events of the year. Last year my boy with a basket of iris and wild grasses won first prize in his class (for the living-room). This year, with a large basket of irises and columbines, he took the grand prize for best individual entry in the show, and we feel that we have helped to put the iris on the map in Pasadena.—ARTHUR J. ROWLEY, Pasadena, Calif.

AMONG THE MOST BEAUTIFUL

Two years ago I received some of your phlox and peonies. They are among the most beautiful flowers in my garden. I am looking forward with pleasure to their blooming this year.—E. JANE ALLISON, Brooklyn, N. Y.

MOVING SALE OF FRUIT TREES

While They Last

Three-Year Apple Trees . . .	\$1 00 each
Three-Year Peach Trees . . .	50 each
Three-Year Pear Trees . . .	1 50 each
Three-Year Cherry Trees . . .	1 50 each
Three-Year Grape Vines . . .	60 each

Our supply is not large enough to offer these by name for your selection. They will be supplied under named label, our selection. We handle only a limited number of the best and most popular varieties and you can be sure of receiving something good and more than your money's worth.

Refund, including transportation charges, if the plants or varieties are not entirely satisfactory. Guaranteed true to label.

The price reduction averages 33 1/3%. Please do not ask us to furnish any particular variety of apple tree, etc. We will supply them as they come, while they last.

BOOSTS AS GOOD AS KICKS

It is due a firm to know when it is giving satisfaction quite as much as to know when it is not giving satisfaction. And it is my belief that a boost may help quite as much as a kick in enabling a firm to give the best service to its patrons.

Your monthly magazine, BETTER PLANTS, is certainly practical and usable. To me, its chief virtue lies in its making seasonal planting information conveniently accessible at the time it is most needed. I regret very much that I did not receive the first issues of the magazine, and if they can still be supplied I should like to have them.—WILMER B. FLORY, Logansport, Ind.

We wish to thank every reader of BETTER PLANTS for the gratifying and evident support and response received during 1924. After the second year of BETTER PLANTS, the editor and originator feels that we have bit on something which our friends appreciate and enjoy. BETTER PLANTS is here to stay and we strive for improvements each year. Thank you again.

Bertrand H. Farr—Wyomissing Nurseries Company
1250 Garfield Avenue, Wyomissing, Penna.